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Letter dated 5 February 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon the instruction of my Government, I am writing to convey Armenia's grave concern about the significant increase in violations of the ceasefire regime by the armed forces of Azerbaijan on the line of contact between Nagorno Karabakh and Azerbaijan and across the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The extensive use of grenade launchers and mortars by the Azerbaijani armed forces is a matter of particular concern. It claims more casualties and destruction and is a new tactic aimed at further escalating the situation. Over the past two months the armed forces of Azerbaijan have been consistently conducting provocative subversive operations and shelling across the border and the line of contact, terrorizing the civilian population of the bordering villages.

Since the beginning of 2015, Azerbaijan has violated the ceasefire regime 2,784 times. The total number of casualties of the armed forces of Armenia and the defence forces of Nagorno Karabakh during the period from 1 January to 31 January 2015 stands at 8. There were also 12 wounded. One civilian was killed over this period. Armenia fully shares the concern of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group co-chairs on the present escalation of tensions, as reflected in their statement of 27 January 2015. Despite this statement, Azerbaijan ignored the call and doubled the intensive violations of the ceasefire regime.

Armenia deplores Azerbaijan's continued policy of escalating the situation on the ground while refusing to demonstrate political will to achieve progress in the negotiations for the peaceful settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict mediated by the Russian Federation, the United States of America and France (the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs). Furthermore, Azerbaijan has refused to agree to the confidence-building measures proposed by the Minsk Group co-chair countries and supported by the Secretary-General. Due to its consistent insistence on "all or nothing" in the negotiations, wrongfully hoping to clinch more concessions,

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Azerbaijan bears full responsibility for the lack of progress in the peace process and consequently for the raising of tensions.

Armenia has continuously drawn the attention of the international community to the adventurous policy pursued by Azerbaijan and has stressed the importance of exerting a sobering effect on Baku so that it may refrain from its policy of acting against the calls of the international community.

In its statement of 27 January 2015, the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs called on Azerbaijan to observe its commitments to a peaceful resolution of the conflict and to abide by the terms of the ceasefire agreement, and reminded Azerbaijan that violence undermines efforts to bring about peace. They also expressed concern about Azerbaijan's criticism of the negotiation process, the role of the Minsk Group co-chairs and the duties of the OSCE monitors.

Armenia is committed to achieving a durable peace and stability and security in the region and will continue to invest its utmost efforts towards the settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict exclusively through peaceful means and on the basis of the purposes, principles and norms reflected in the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act and the provisions of the statements of the Presidents of the Minsk Group co-chair countries made at L'Aquila, Italy; Muskoka, Canada; Deauville, France; Los Cabos, Mexico; and Enniskillen, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I kindly request that the present letter be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 32, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Zohrab **Mnatsakanyan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative